IRON AND STEEL STRIKE

PRESIDENT SHAFFER, OF AMALGAMATED ASSOCIATION, TALKS.

Gives a Little History of the Organization and Outlines Present Attitude of Workmen.

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I regret exceedingly my inability properly to convey satisfactory ideas of the Amalgamated Association's organic autonomy, principles of action, and, especially, its position as an arbiter in the contentions of capital and labor. The inability arises from the variety and complexity of our scales, producing a nomenclature and technology which would be meaningless to the ordinary student of economic problems—consequently the limitations placed upon the subject by these considerations reduce my attempt at article-writing to mere narrative.

The Amalgamated Association was organized Aug. 4, 1876, in the city of Pittsburg, Pa. Its purpose was to render uniform the work, conditions and earnings of those who became its members. This was made difficult by the location of plants. Some were in places where fuel, transportation, labor and other items of producing cost were more favorable to the owners than to those in other places; also by the difference in productive capacity, it being conceded by all interested that a large output of manufactured commodities was decidedly advantageous to the workmen, by facility of operation, and to the manufacturer, by ability to control the market, in securing large orders, which the smaller producer could not cover in a restricted term. As our people work by the ton, the above conditions resulted in such disparities of daily earnings that dissatisfaction was engendered, and complaints proceeded from both sides, necessitating conventions of the men and conferences with the manufacturers, eventuating in the following law:

"When improved machinery is introduced, or new methods of operation are employed, which shall reduce the work of the men and increase the output of the mill, there shall be reconstruction of the scale."

As our scales are annual contracts, the conservatism of the association is evidenced by the provision just recited, and the progressiveness of the American mill worker is differentiated from the tardiness, or reluctance, of the foreign workman, who always makes a grievance of an attempt to introduce invention, improvement and specialization.

STRIKES WHICH WERE LOST.

This and other conciliatory legislation secured for us recognition and just treatment, as well as fair compensation from our employers, and our organization increased numerically, financially and socially—if such a term can be applied to trade-unionism when associated with ecclesiastical and political institutions—until the years 1890-1892, inclusive, when we lost the steel mills of Carnegie by the Homstead strike—lamentable affair—and the sheet interests of Apollo and Leechburg, Pa., which have been centered in Vandegrift, Pa., the largest sheet manufactory in the world. Exactly why we lost the latter does not seem to be thoroughly understood by any one.

The history is as follows: One of our men employed by Mr. George McMurtrie, of Apollo, Pa., violated some rule, was discharged, and a strike inaugurated, which was of brief duration, as the president of the Amalgamated Association, upon learning the cause of the trouble, immediately notified Mr. McMurtrie that the men would be required to return to work immediately and a superior workman supplied for the position of the recalcitrant employe. This action was consonant with our law and practice, but all overtures were rejected, and a protracted struggle ensued, during which we were dispossessed of the mills alluded to, and all new plants erected by Mr. McMurtrie were guarded carefully and prevented from joining the organization. In a somewhat similar manner we lost the mills of Jones & McLaughlin, of Pittsburg, and a few others, the latter now under the control of and operated by the American Steel Hoop Company. When business depression and an evil competitive policy of price-cutting had reduced the profits of the investor and the wages of the men to a minimum, so that it was profitless for the former to remain in the business and the latter lived from hand to mouth, relief was sought and obtained by the formation of larger incorporated companies or trusts. The Amalgamated Association, reduced in strength by the defections spoken of, was rehabilitated by an accession of workers from an industry introduced during the period of depression—namely, the manufacturing of tin plates—and when the coalition of firms presented the trust to the industrial and commercial world, we essayed to imitate the example by organizing all the men who labor at skilled jobs in the rolling mills. I request careful attention and scrutiny of the subjoined prevalent conditions.

WORKINGMEN'S "TRUSTS."

The National Steel Company was classified by us as being composite—i. e., union and nonunion. I employ the phraseology of the trade-unionist. The American Steel Hoop, American Sheet Steel and National Tube were also of this class, and are so to-day. The Republic Iron and Steel, the Illinois or Federal Steel and the American Tin-plate Companies were similar; but we organized seven mills of the first, two of the second and, I think, six of the last. The new lodges were recognized and treated for by the trusts excepting one mill of the American Tin-plate Company situated in Monessen, Pa. This was excluded because of a peculiar and different method of work, the "Amalgamated" agreeing to the arrangement. We pledged ourselves to inflict no punishment or penalties, by fining or refusing to work with the men who had worked in the unorganized mills, but received them upon the usual conditions imposed upon all who join our ranks.

We organized about three hundred employes of the Carnegie Homestead mills, but this lodge was disbanded, because the company discharged those who were known to have connected themselves with us. This, we claim, was a violation of the "anti-discrimination law" of Pennsylvania, regulating the relations of employers to organized bodies of labor, and making it a misdemeanor to discharge for this cause, or require them to leave such organizations, or compel them to refrain from joining. We have covered the men of Lindsey & McCutcheon's mills, the Painter's mill, Pittsburg, both owned by the American Steel Hoop Company. This company is willing to sign our scale for six mills doing similar work, but refuses peremptorily to do so for the two named.

In June, 1900, the men of Wood's mill, McKeesport, Pa., owned by the sheet steel trust, requested admittance to our society. They were received, but no attempt was made to secure improvement of mill surroundings, which were deplorable, or to increase their wages, which were far below those paid to our people in other mills run by the same firm.

In 1901 discovery was made of their affiliation with us, and seven men removed from positions which most had held for periods ranging from eight to twenty-one years, the cause assigned for discharge being identification with the Amalgamated Association. The men resisted, and, aided by the association, wrested a promise of reinstatement from the managers of the concern. The agreement has not been kept in its entirety, only six being permitted to return to their employment. As we were accused of affecting disastrously the stocks and commercial markets, we submitted and secured work elsewhere for our victimized brother.

MR. SCHWAB AND HOMESTEAD.

While much of the above was transpiring the seven trusts with which we dealt were reorganized into what is well known as the United States Steel Company. It has never expressed hostility to organized labor—at least, not officially. It is true that Mr. Schwab, its president, expressed views, while before the Industrial Commission, which have construed as inimical to us, but Mr. Schwab has been misinterpreted by many papers, their reports not being consonant with the stenographic copy in my possession. But if their exposition were correct, its force would be lost when the fact is considered that he spoke of organized labor as he viewed it in the terrible and murderous light—kindled, perhaps, as much by misguided judgment as by insatiate desire for affluence and power—when capital and labor unitedly became responsible for all the misdeeds consequent upon Homestead's gigantic blunder.

The Amalgamated Association laid carefully to heart all the bitter experience of that hour, and, being made wiser, is endeavoring to follow the peaceful and more profitable path of business method. As one manufacturer, Colonel French, of Chicago, has said, "We are endeavoring to treat on the broad equities and, dealing as partner with partner, in all honesty and fairness aim to do that which is just to both." Intercourse with such men as Colonel French has been salutary and beneficial.

With the Illinois Steel Company and the Republic Iron and Steel Company we have agreed upon wage settlements which virtually reduce the possibility of strikes, or even the cessation of operation of plants, and our law compels us to extend to all with whom we treat any and all privileges accorded to one. In order to elucidate this, it will be necessary to explain our rules for formulating scales:

The manufacturing territory of the United States is divided into districts, with a vice president over each. These districts are composed of subordinate lodges, one or more to each department of a mill, comprehending certain crafts. The districts are merged into a national lodge, to which all are responsible. Each year the lodges, in the month of April, hold meetings and consider suggestions for changing our constitution and scales. These are sent to the national lodge, which prints and distributes them to subordinate lodges. This year we issued a manufacturers' edition, so that they might know, before we considered and acted upon them in convention, exactly what our members desired.

The national president appoints a wage committee, which examines the suggestions and, selecting those deemed fair, reports a scale to the delegates of the succeeding convention. The latter body usually further modifies, thus eliding the radical and preserving the just demands made upon the employers. A conference committee, generally vested with plenary authority, is appointed by the president, and a meeting held with the manufacturers, when an annual scale is obtained by further reductions proposed by them. In case no agreement is reached before July 1 of each year, work is discontinued and we are regarded as being on strike.

PLAN FOR THIS SUMMER'S STRIKE.

Last year we required three months of deliberation before reaching conclusions mutually satisfactory. The Republic Iron and Steel Company requested that we arrange plans to obviate such long periods of negotiation, as orders were diverted, capital invested yielded no return and numerous concomitant evils resulted from the interruption. This year we agreed to select jointly with them a board of conciliation which will be called upon to interfere next year in case the ordinary conference should fail to arrange a scale. The mills are to continue operating while conciliatory measures are being employed, our people agreeing to work at the wages of this year until a settlement shall be reached. This plan of mediation will be granted to all companies which may desire it, upon their signing for all their plants. The American Sheet Steel and the American Steel Hoop have refused, and the result is the present unpleasant and strained relations between us. Many of the men working for these two trusts are members of the "A. A." whom we set to work, agreeing to protect their reputation as union workmen. Others have united with us; some are restrained by fear, while a few prefer to work independently. Our plan is to call our people from all the union mills and nonunion as well, and to keep them out until their right to organize is admitted by the trusts; but we do not fear that this will be necessary. Already we have had conferences with the other side, and at last they are prepared to meet us. If the decisive meeting should fail to accomplish its purpose, all the men connected with us will cease working and hundreds will join them, while thousands, not responsible and not in any sense the authors of the troubles, will be thrown into a state of idleness.

The Amalgamated Association cannot afford to be wrong, neither will its officials precipitate troubles which may bring suffering to thousands and dishonor to the institutions and laws of our country; but we shall endeavor to protect the weak, prevent distress and destitution, perpetuate principles of fair dealing and elevate trades-unionism by such a display of business method as shall gain for it the assistance and encouragement of the church, the state and the investor of capital.

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The Postman.

At morning and at evening,
As he comes along the street,
A hundred ears are listening
For the tramping of his feet;
A hundred eyes are watching—
A half-expectant throng—
And hearts are cheered or saddened
As the postman comes along.

The maid sighs for her lover,
And the smile upon her face
Fades into disappointment;
And a careful eye can trace
The marks of tell-tale teardrops—
And a tremble in her song
Betrays her girlish secret
As the postman comes along.

The husband's eyes grow brighter,
And he pauses in his strife
For gain to read a letter
From a faithful little wife;
And a gray-haired father mutters:
"Somethin' surely must be wrong
'Cause I didn't hear from Johnnie,"
As the postman comes along.

Just next door is a mother,
From her eyes gush tears of joy
As she reads aloud a letter
From her far-off soldier boy.
Thus a hundred eyes are watching—
A half-expectant throng—
And hearts are cheered or saddened
As the postman comes along.

—James William Callahan.

How He Kept Tab.

Judge.

"You seem to have a lot of relations. How do you keep track of them?"

"I read the obituary column in the papers every day."

THE USEFUL MICROBES

BACTERIA CONSTANTLY WORKING IN BEHALF OF THE HUMAN RACE.

The New Science of Industrial Biology Likely to Revolutionize Manufacturing Methods.

BOSTON, July 20.—A paper recently read before the Boston Society of Natural History, by Mr. Samuel C. Prescott, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology deals with a subject of unusual interest—what may popularly be called, perhaps, a vindication of the microbe as a useful factor in society. From this paper, which is founded on a long series of experiments undertaken in the biological laboratories of the institute, it appears that not only—as is comparatively well known—are certain sorts of bacteria now used as scavangers to fight their disease-producing kindred, and not only is it generally recognized that all life depends upon bacterial activity, but that in a long list of important industries success is quite impossible without their assistance. Knowingly or not, the brewer uses microbes to secure certain definite qualities in his product, and the farmer's wife in ripening her cream for churning gives the bacteria which it contains an opportunity to improve the taste and aroma of her butter. In the case of scores of products—often the best known and most generally used—people have for centuries constantly profited by bacterial processes without suspecting that they were doing so—and, consequently, with uncertain success in the results obtained. But within a few years, experiments, of which Mr. Prescott's are among the most recent, have resulted in what may fairly be called a new science, that of "industrial biology," the practical benefit of which can even now hardly be calculated.

INDUSTRIAL BIOLOGY.

Investigations into the processes of baking, brewing and winemaking, the preparation of skins for tanning, the dairy and sugar industries, and a great number of changes and reactions formerly believed to be purely chemical in character, have shown that the real work is done by living organisms. It is all a question of fermentation, the meaning of the word having been extended to cover a multitude of changes which are alike in having a living cell as their first cause; so that industrial biology, broadly speaking, becomes the science of fermentation, the bacteria being studied in connection with various kinds of mold and yeast. A mold is a colorless, branching organism that grows like a plant and when submerged in sugar solutions, without access to air, gives rise to a vigorous alcoholic fermentation. The various yeasts are small oval or rounded organisms which rapidly increase in number under favorable conditions by a process of budding, and have an industrial value dependent upon their activity as producers of alcohol and carbon dioxide. The bacteria, which are smaller and presumably simpler than either molds or yeasts, have a greater diversity of fermenting power, and are found nearly everywhere in enormous numbers—in air, in water, in earth, and in food. They may be rod-shaped like a bit of slate pencil, spherical like a pea, or twisted like a corkscrew. They appear to vary in size, although the average diameter is roughly given as one-twenty-five-thousandth of an inch, which would mean that somewhere near a billion could be contained in the space of a single grain of granulated sugar. When these micro-organisms find themselves in any suitable nutriment they grow active and multiply by "fission," as the bacteriologists call it; that is, they are constantly being cut in two, so that a single microbe may become a million in the course of a few hours. And this enormous multiplication continues until further growth is choked off by lack of space or by the exhaustion of the food supply.

VEGETAPLE, NOT ANIMAL.

It is comforting—and a little surprising, perhaps—to learn that organisms so numerous and ubiquitous are in the main the friends and allies of humanity. Most persons, too, will probably have a kinder feeling towards the bacterium and its various functions when they learn that it has a vegetable rather than an animal character. For a time it was maintained that it was animal because it often had hairlike tentacles by means of which it seemed to be capable of moving from place to place. The authorities have at last definitely decided, however, that bacteria constitute the lowest order of plant life and may be sown to produce certain results just as the seeds of larger vegetables are sown.

Perhaps one of the best illustrations of the application of industrial biology is in butter making. Milk, as is well known, is a particularly good medium for the growth of bacteria. They begin to appear in it from the time it leaves the cow and are the cause of the souring which is so universal that for a long time it was supposed to be a purely "natural" change. When milk is to be used as such it is better without bacteria. Cream which is to be used in butter making, on the other hand, produces the best results when it has undergone a "ripening" process—fermentation, in other words—caused by certain kinds of micro-organisms. Just as distilled water is tasteless and insipid, so butter made from perfectly fresh cream is simple fat, and lacks the distinguishing flavor and aroma which makes it palatable. When cream is allowed to stand in the dairy enough of the right sort of bacteria usually get into it to start the proper fermentation, although in receiving these it may also receive others, less desirable, which cause the butter to become rancid.

EXPERIMENTS WITH BUTTER.

With the idea of reducing uncertainty to certainty the bacteriologist has succeeded in colonizing the peculiar bacteria which have been found to produce the finest quality of butter, so that by the use of such butter cultures, as they are called, when the manufacture is undertaken on a large scale a high-grade, uniform product may be obtained which will keep longer than butter less systematically "seeded." Moreover, in the same way that a farmer removes the weeds from a field before he plants his corn or oats, so in order to rid it of undesirable bacteria the modern butter maker heats his cream to perhaps 170 degrees—"Pasteurizes" it, in the language of industrial biology—before he seeds it with the pure butter culture. This butter "seed," as it may be called, has originally come from the best of cream, and has been cultivated in a laboratory under conditions which insure absolute purity. It may have been prepared in powdered form mixed with sugar of milk, or it may be contained in some liquid medium. In some of the larger butter making establishments the practice is to mix a few ounces of the culture with a considerable amount of milk, which is then allowed to stand until a sufficient number of bacteria have been developed. This milk is used as a "starter," so-called, for a quantity of cream large enough to make perhaps a ton of butter. In other words, the milk "starter" is a sort of a nursery from which the microscopic bacteria may be transplanted to the cream without contamination, so that the quality of the product may be definitely predicted. Afterwards, if sufficient care is taken, a portion of one lot of properly seeded cream may be used to seed the next, and this process be continued for some time without the need of specially prepared cultures.

A VARIED UTILITY.

The action of the microbes in bread making and brewing, in the fermentation of the mash for the distillation of spirits is somewhat more complicated. In the ripening of butter the bacterial action results directly in producing the desired ethers and salts, but in alcoholic fermentation, for example, there are several successive stages before the required results are obtained. In sugar making, tanning, vinegar making and, more especially, cheese making bacteria might naturally be looked for as the agents of productive industry, but it is more surprising that even in the textile manufactures microbes have been found to have their utility. In the separation of the fibers of hemp, flax and jute they have long been employed, though of course without its being known that such was the fact. Flax, for example, is the "bast" fiber of the flax plant, and in order to separate it for the manufacture of linen it is necessary to dissolve a gummy, resinous substance which binds the flexible fibers to those which are brittle and useless. This is done by a process known as "retting," the stems being gathered in bundles and then set in tanks or rivers or ponds, where they are allowed to stay for ten or twelve days. During this process the gum, insoluble in water alone, is attacked by the bacteria which the water contains and decomposed or fermented, leaving the fibers easily separable. The waters of certain streams have become famous for their peculiar effect on flax, as, for instance, the water of the river Lys, in Belgium, which had evidently become thoroughly planted with the proper bacteria for retting. Since the fermentation of the gum in this process probably also affects the strength of the fibers many attempts have been made to accomplish the separation by mechanical means, but up to the present it has been found impossible to get along without the assistance of the bacteria.

Examples of the productive importance of microbes might be multiplied indefinitely. It is even suggested that the aroma of the finest tobacco may be secured in lower grades by the proper cultures. But, interesting as the prospect of such discoveries may be, it has always been found necessary at the institute to protect the good microbes at every step from the danger of disastrous competition with those whose character is mischievous. Milk, for instance, is subject not only to the bacteria which sour it, but to others which make it blue or "ropy" or bitter. In the same way, beer, whisky, bread, and other products have their peculiar bacterial diseases. All foodstuffs which spoil, indeed, do so as a result of fermentation produced by bacteria, and it is largely to delay their action that foods are cooked, smoked, preserved, or kept on ice. The further one goes, in fact, the more one is impressed by the uses to which industrial biology can be put. It is clearly its province to determine the character of the enormous number of harmful microbes which attack every variety of food, and to present a remedy for their action, the enormous growth of the canning industry being only one example of the commercial value of any new discovery in the biologist's laboratory.

Under the Elms.

Nocturne: adagio.

"Say, love, if we be not in Paradise?
Yon is no leafy roof above our heads,
But a cloud-bridge of the great infinite;
Those myriad, swaying, twinkling lamps were stars
If seen from earth by mortals; and these paths
Stray endlessly to pleasure, woven around
Through this soul's garden, fairest spot of all;
Those that flit by us, laughing soft, in white,
Are spirits, like ourselves blest beyond hoping;
(Without the blazen gates the hopeless cry);
From some far sun, list to the angels singing!
Answer me, love, is not this Paradise?"

"Love, where thou art is always Paradise."

—Lloyd McKim Garrison.

CARE AND BURIAL OF THE DEAD

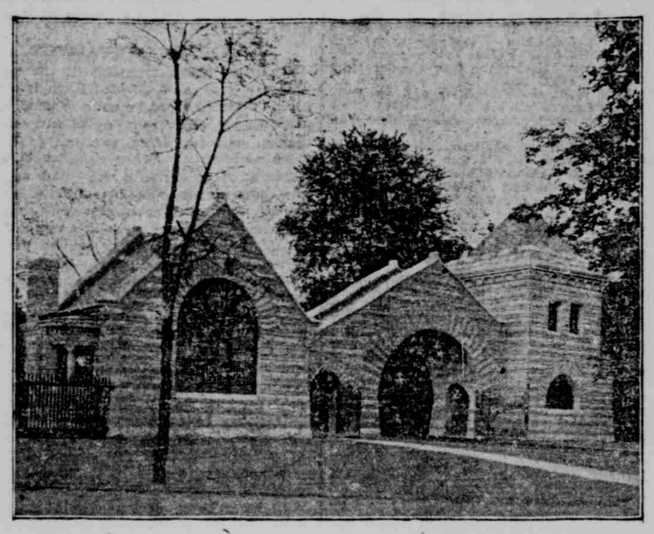
THE GREAT WORK ACCOMPLISHED BY THE FIRM OF FLANNER & BUCHANAN.

They Have Buried Nearly 10,000 People—Their Model Undertaking Establishment—The Latest Approved Methods Used by This Enterprising Firm.

The completion of the Roman gateway at the west entrance to Crown Hill Cemetery marks a new decade in the business career of Flanner & Buchanan. The new gateway was opened May 19, and this firm has the honor of taking the first funeral through its portals.

Twenty years ago, while the east entrance gateway was under process of construction, this firm entered the undertaking business in the old Miller block, still standing, on North Illinois street.

In 1883 they moved two squares north on the same street, into the mansion built and occupied by the late Mr. Browning, of the old drug firm of Browning & Sloan. This they remodeled, building front office, private morgue, show room and chapel, etc., with private driveway on the south side.



NEW WEST ENTRANCE TO CROWN HILL.

About this time the Arabian team, Dick Snow and Jack Frost, was purchased and installed in the new stables. They are now fourteen years old, and though still active, are losing their style and symmetry of form and will soon be pensioned off, their places being taken by a pair of youngsters, Dandy and Dude, full brothers, snow white, now being driven to the wagon and introduced to street cars and automobiles before hitching them to the new white car, duplicate of the handsomely carved black one purchased two years ago. This new white car will be the finest in the State. The eight columns are exquisitely carved from designs furnished by Mrs. Buchanan. The inside finish is of white mahogany. An electric bell operated by push button at the rear will inform the driver when casket is in place.

FLANNER & BUCHANAN'S ESTABLISHMENT.

During these twenty years of faithful service this firm has officiated at the funerals of 9,977 deceased persons, or twice the number accredited to any other firm by Board of Health records.

When one considers that in the vast cemetery of Crown Hill there have been about 30,000 interments, a small city; yet if all the burials by this firm had been at Crown Hill, it would equal one-third of all the burials there.

Mr. Flanner, in speaking of the growth of their business, said: "I have always doubted whether we would have succeeded in establishing our business had it not been for the co-operation of Odd Fellows, relief committees and the railroad surgeons." The first was secured by naming a contract price at which members could have a respectable burial for the funeral benefits allowed by the lodges. These contracts were afterwards extended to other secret orders and have formed an important branch of their business, being still in force and by their kind offices saving many widows and orphans from burdensome debt for funeral expenses.

The railroad work was secured by the introduction of the ambulance. This was before the city had anything of the kind and it became a matter of great moment to the companies that the injured should have prompt and careful transfer to the hospital. This service was rendered for several years by Flanner & Buchanan.

This firm was the first in the city (and the only one so far) to have a lady exclusively in their employ for taking care of ladies and children. And to-day all attention necessary about a lady or child is done exclusively by Miss Nettie Thomas, except the carrying in and out of the casket from the house. Mr. Buchanan said that he hardly sees now how they ever got along with the delicate attentions needed by a woman or child when it was done, and is done yet by many firms, by men.

The proper care of the dead is no longer intrusted to the inexperienced. The kind offices of the neighbors are now extended to the living, and the embalmer is called at once to take charge of the dead. The question is no longer asked, "Do you want a lady attendant?" When this firm is called to lay out a lady or child the lady attendant is always sent. The firm carries a great variety of funeral furnishings in their spacious establishment, but no undertaker has room for all the styles. For special designs catalogues are used, or those selecting are taken in closed carriage to the large show rooms of the National Casket Company, of this city. There the special designer is consulted and individual ideas are carried out. The firm goes on the theory that even in times of grief most people know what they want, both in furnishings and as to how the funeral is to be conducted. The business of the undertaker is to find out these wishes and by his experience and training to carry out the details to the greatest satisfaction of those concerned, with the least possible jar and friction. This requires not only natural adaptability, but constant training in the right direction and in the right spirit. The profession of the undertaker is second only to that of the minister. Indeed, he should be no less a Christian and no less a gentleman in this Christian land, where all have the right to a Christian burial.